

Tiphanie

Age 17

My first two weeks working with the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services has been incredibly informative. This experience has taught me so much in so little time. As an intern for Yaiza Garabito-Burrell, I am constantly learning things I never knew. My first three days as an intern were mainly office work. This is where I learned what a constituent was and how to document complaints and/or inquiries. I also learned how to properly answer constituents and how to file them into the system. Within this time period I also followed-up on previously filed complaints and inquiries. On my fourth day the first half I had office related responsibilities but later in the day I went out in the field. My first field experience was very interesting; my duties were to follow-up and document a previous Fix-It. This experience was informative because I had the opportunity to experience first hand what the outreach and service specialist did for our city.

At the end of my first week I was given an amazing opportunity that I could only experience while working with the Mayor's office. On this day I went to a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the re-opening of 14th and Girard Street Park. The ceremony was very nice and made me appreciate little things such as parks. I came to better understand that every neighborhood is different and that some people actually care that children have a park to play in. During the ceremony I met with a lot of the community members and took photos. Right after the ceremony I then proceeded to a house located on Newton street. The residence was once boarded by the district's government but had been broken into. After arriving on the

scene I met with some police officers who informed Mrs. Garabito-Burrell and myself the severity of the situation and who showed us the damaging effects of the building. Immediately we called to inform the correct agencies that this building needed to be closed and re-boarded. We waited on scene for the agencies to arrive. Once they did we properly informed them of the situation and explain what we had learned from the police officers and community members.

After this experience I had the opportunity to go to a presser. The presser was held in the Park Morton community. This presser was on a situation that occurred on July 5, 2009 12:30 a.m. Unfortunately after all the festivities on July 4th a resident was shot and killed. This presser informed the media and the community that police presence ,as a part of a city wide All Hands On Deck, would be within the community for the entire weekend. After the presser I met with some community members and gave them information regarding their situations. I also set up meetings so the constituents could bring in any documentation they have.

Within my second week of working as an intern I went to my first fix-it. This fix-it was located on 14th St. and Columbia Rd. in the alley. My duties were to photograph and document all areas that the agencies corrected. I was also responsible for making sure everyone signed-in and I escorted a DDOT official around the area to ensure all things were taken care of. After the fix-it I meet with some constituents to retrieve some documents. After meeting with these constituents I attended a meeting with a Park Morton resident. During this meeting we discussed options to better improve the community.

The rest of my week involved planning a new fix-it, meeting with constituents and, following up on previous complaints and inquiries. I also volunteered at a local food bank. This

experience was very amazing and humbling. We, the interns, helped to unpack and categorize food and health items. The items will be distributed to the less fortunate. Experiences such as the one we were provided with makes you grateful and appreciative of the things you take for granted.

In conclusion my first two weeks as an intern within the Mayor's office has been unforgettable. I have learned a lot of things I never knew and experienced things I will always remember. The things I learned here will help me later in life when I am making. Even with all the technical information I am learning, I also learned that not everyone is willing to make a difference. A percentage of the city's residents complain and expect the Mayor's office to do everything, when they should be trying to help out their communities. I have learned that the Mayor's office is here to assist people not do everything the community thinks needs to be done.